

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 09585 200323Z

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SSO-00 DODE-00 L-03 OMB-01 MC-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 INRE-00

NSCE-00 /047 W

----- 125198

O R 200245Z AUG 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6494

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE HONG KONG 9585

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, EWWT, VS, HK

SUBJECT: THE GOOD SHIP TRUONG XUAN

REF: STATE 196046 (NOTAL)

1. THE "TRUONG XUAN" HAS BEEN IN HONG KONG SINCE JULY 4. HONG KONG PREVENTIVE SERVICES (CUSTOMS) ADVISED CONGEN THAT IN THE COURSE OF INSPECTING THE "TRUONG XUAN" THEY CAME UP WITH 96 BULLETS, 40 CARTRIDGE CASINGS, A DOZEN MAGAZINE CLIPS AND A PILE OF VEHICULAR JUNK. THERE WERE NO WEAPONS ABOARD THE SHIP. IN FACT, ANYTHING OF ANY VALUE THAT WAS MOVEABLE HAD BEEN REMOVED, PRESUMABLY BY FISHERMEN WHO HAD SCAVENGED THE SHIP BEFORE ITS RECOVERY. ACCORDING TO LOCAL SOURCES, A FIRM REPRESENTING THE PRG HAS SOLD THE SHIP TO LOCAL JUNK DEALERS FOR \$HK 600,000 (ABOUT \$120,000 US).

2. THE "TRUONG XUAN" DEPARTED SAIGON AT THE END OF APRIL WITH 3744 REFUGEES ABOARD. ON MAY 3 THE SHIP, LOCATED ABOUT 100 MILES OFF SAIGON, SIGNALLED IT WAS SINKING AND 3743 REFUGEES (ONE MAN DIED OF A HEART ATTACK) WERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 HONG K 09585 200323Z

TRANSFERRED TO THE CLARA MAERSK AND TAKEN TO HONG KONG.

ON JULY 1 THE HONG KONG OWNED CARGO SHIP "TAILONGSHAN"
FOUND THE ABANDONED SHIP AND TOWED IT FOR ABOUT 300 MILES
TOWARD HONG KONG WHEN IT RECEIVED ORDERS TO ABANDON THE
DERELICT BECAUSE OF "OBLIGATIONS TO THE CARGO SHIPPERS".
(COMMENT: IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED HERE THAT THE OWNERS
OF THE SOMALIAN REGISTERED "TAILONGSHAN" GAVE IN TO
POLITICAL PRESSURE FROM THE PRG OR THE PRC. END COMMENT).
THE "TRUONG XUAN" WAS SET ADRIFT ABOUT 23 MILES OFF HONG
KONG HARBOR AND LOCAL TUGS RACED TO CLAIM HER. ON JULY 4
THE TUG "WILVIN" OWNED BY INTER OCEAN TOWING, SINGAPORE,
AND REPRESENTED BY THE HONG KONG SHIPPING COMPANY, SIME
DARBY, BROUGHT THE PRIZE INTO HONG KONG. SINCE THAT TIME
SIME DARBY HAS BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH A FIRM REPRESENTING
THE PRG. INFORMED SOURCES REPORT THAT A SETTLEMENT WAS
REACHED THIS WEEK IN WHICH THE "TRUONG XUAN" WAS RELEASED
TO THE PRG FOR \$HK 250,000 (US\$50,000). THE PRG THEN
SOLD THE SHIP TO THE LOCAL DEALER FOR JUNK.
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Message Attributes

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